

IN THE ABSTRACT

A1 An apparatus for expanding a character string. ~~The,~~
~~which~~ character string that is entered to search includes a
character string dividing device to divide the entered
character string into partial character strings. A, a
referencing device is provided to reference a similarity
table. ~~The,~~ the similarity table stores in advance similar
partial character strings, each of the similar partial
character strings being derived from each of the partial
character strings by changing at least one of the characters
of each string to a different character which is similar in
shape. An, ~~and an~~ expansion device is provided to combine
similar partial character strings into expanded words and
store them in table.